

Colella et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,003,006). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a "means for communicating said electronically recorded shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items to a microprocessor accessible to a purchaser of said one or more product items for managing use of said one or more product items." Neither Singer nor Colella teaches or suggests this limitation. Singer discloses an automated storage facility where a product's shelf life is maintained in an SKU table. The shelf life is used by a computer to compute an expiration date. Colella discloses a system of drug distribution to health care providers that incorporates low unit dose measure drug packaging that includes bar codes. The bar codes may contain expiration dates of the associated drugs.

Neither Singer nor Colella disclose, however, that the shelf-life limitation information be provided to a microprocessor accessible to a purchaser of said one or more product items for managing use of said one or more products items. Thus, the systems in Singer and Colella suffer the same deficiencies as the prior art in that there is no method for a purchasing customer to manage use of product items based on their shelf-life limitation information. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 3-9 are also in condition for allowance because they depend directly or indirectly on allowable claim 1, and for the additional limitations that they contain.

Claims 34-38 are new in this application. Independent claim 35 is a non-means-plus-function system claim that contains limitations similar to the limitations of independent claim 9. Accordingly, claim 35 is also allowable.

Claims 34 and 36-38 are also allowable because they depend on an allowable base claim, and for the additional limitations that they contain.

Application No. 09/973,303

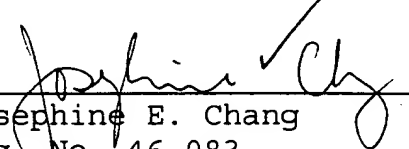
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reexamination, reconsideration, and an early indication of allowance of claims 1,3-9, and 34-38.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) A system for controlling product items with shelf-life limitations comprising:

means for determining shelf-life limitation information for each of one or more product items;

means for recording said shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items;

means for reading said recorded shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items;

means for electronically recording said shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items in an electronically readable and storable form.

means for communicating said electronically recorded shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items to a microprocessor, the microprocessor accessible to a purchaser of said one or more product items for managing use of said one or more product items based on the shelf-life limitation information.

3. (Amended) The system of claim 21, further comprising:

means for storing said communicated electronic shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items in a memory accessible by said microprocessor.

6. (Amended) The system of claim 5, further comprising:

means for ~~a~~ the purchaser to interact with said on-screen display of said formatted electronic shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items to identify new product items.

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